

The City’s System-Wide Vision for the Green Line

It is the City’s desire and expectation that the Green Line will provide access to jobs, housing, services, and cultural and recreational resources in Northwest Seattle, Southwest Seattle and the Center City through a well-connected network of monorail stations, pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities. The monorail will also be a defining element of urban form within the communities it serves, and will be designed to reinforce existing character and support neighborhood development objectives. Within this larger vision, the City is crafting—with community input—a concept for each station area and segment of the monorail corridor that builds on the objectives and policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and respective adopted neighborhood plans.

West Seattle Concept

The arrival of the Green Line provides the opportunity for Morgan and Alaska Junctions to regain some of the historic relevance of their names as transportation hubs. Alaska Junction became, and has remained, West Seattle’s “downtown.” With two monorail stations in the West Seattle Junction Urban Hub — at Alaska Junction and Avalon — the monorail will reinforce that role and make the area a destination neighborhood for other parts of Seattle as well. Over the last several years, Morgan Junction has developed from a small crossroads into an urban village. As the southern terminus of the Green Line, Morgan Junction will gain the transit service its neighborhood plan sought and become an even greater center for activity for surrounding residential neighborhoods. With careful planning, Morgan Junction will be able to retain and reinforce its village atmosphere as redevelopment occurs.

Key Corridor Elements and Actions

Corridor Operations

Because the monorail guideway will change the configuration of streets along the Green Line corridor, the City will reexamine how these streets will function in the future for general traffic, transit, freight, bicycles, and pedestrians. Key actions for the West Seattle segment may include:

- Retaining bus service along California Avenue between Morgan and Alaska Junctions.
- Retaining as much on-street parking as possible between columns and bus operations.

Land Use Policy for the Guideway Zone

The monorail guideway will effectively create a new “zone” within which the guideway structure and monorail transit service are defining elements of urban form. It may be appropriate for land use policy within this virtual zone to respond to these new conditions. A context-specific guideway overlay for West Seattle segment may include features such as:

- Reducing parking requirements.
- Prohibiting certain auto-oriented uses.
- Establishing height, bulk, setback, and entrance standards developed specifically for properties lining the guideway.

Streetscape Design in the Guideway Corridor

Insertion of the monorail guideway into city streets will necessitate redesign of the corridor streetscape. Columns will typically be located in a parking or travel lane on the side of the street, creating an opportunity to consider a menu of streetscape design options. Actions applicable to West Seattle segment may include:

- Pedestrian-friendly or scaled paving, landscaping, lighting, and street furniture to reinforce neighborhood character.
- Using the guideway structure to provide pedestrian amenities such as lighting, signage, or bus/weather shelters.
- Using the linear feature of guideway for a public art installation and/or signature landscape design treatment.
- Creating pockets of public space for outdoor cafes or other uses where wider sidewalks provide the opportunity to do so.

Key Station Area Elements and Actions

Station Area Access

The key to making the most of the monorail is to provide a network of clear, safe, and well-detailed paths providing multiple options for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders to reach each station. In this way, the monorail can serve as one part of an interconnected transportation system for intra- and inter-neighborhood mobility. Toward that end, each station will have a comprehensive access plan outlining needed improvements. Key actions for West Seattle stations may include:

- Transit circulation linking Morgan Junction to the Fauntleroy Ferry, Lincoln Park, High Point and other neighborhoods adjacent to Morgan Junction.
- Expanding California Avenue streetscape in Alaska Junction to contiguous streets and creating an integrated pedestrian network using sidewalks and alleys throughout the Junction.
- Evaluating and updating street crossing facilities and timing at important intersections.
- Creating bike paths in the interior of the peninsula - particularly to connect the business areas to the perimeter bike route and to the Spokane Street Bike Path leading to downtown Seattle.

Key Station Area Elements and Actions *continued*

Station Area Parking

Following guidance from the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the Green Line project does not envision new park-and-ride facilities and instead emphasizes alternatives to private automobile access to transit stations. To ensure that monorail stations do no create parking problems within station areas, a parking mitigation plan will be developed and implemented by SMP and the City of Seattle Department of Transportation. Additional actions may also include:

- Conducting a comprehensive parking needs study for Alaska Junction conducted by the Junction Business Improvement Association to determine the need and support for possible new parking facilities.

Station Area Land Use Policy

The monorail will create the potential for transit-oriented development within station areas, and can assist in creating more housing options within communities. In most cases, the vision that the Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plans establish for these station areas is already transit and pedestrian-oriented, but current land use policy and zoning may not provide the best mix of incentives for this kind of development. Key actions for West Seattle may include:

- Measures to increase pedestrian-oriented commercial development and housing in the Morgan Junction area.
- Zoning and development standard incentives to encourage development in the Alaska Junction.
- Possible change of commercial zoning (C) to neighborhood commercial (NC) in the Avalon station area to encourage more pedestrian-oriented development as specified in the neighborhood plan.
- Creating a “Main Street” along Alaska Street connecting Alaska Junction to 35th Avenue near the Avalon Station.

Strategic Development Sites in the Station Area

Supporting transit through development requires appropriate zoning, available sites for redevelopment, and a ready market. Redevelopment of currently under-utilized sites, or sites that could have a strong relationship to a monorail station could be catalysts to encourage desired development more broadly within station areas. Key sites in West Seattle may include:

- Redevelopment of Morgan Junction Thriftway parking lot into a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented signature building with parking included.
- Associated development to the north of the Alaska Junction station that addresses the station plaza and reinforces the through-block and alleyway pedestrian environment in the Junction.

The Public Realm of the Station Area

Beyond basic access improvements, there are opportunities to enhance the public realm around each station in support of transit and pedestrian-oriented development. These kinds of improvements are often what lend identity and character to communities and make them memorable. Key actions in West Seattle may include:

- Developing a plan for the intersection of California Avenue and Fauntleroy Way that captures Morgan Junction’s sense of place that could include urban open space, landscaping, and public art.
- Creating a gateway to West Seattle along Fauntleroy Way at 35th Avenue SW through landscaping and possible installation of public art or iconic structure.
- Creating an entrance to West Seattle Stadium from 35th Avenue which would serve monorail riders and the developing mixed-use neighborhood around the Avalon station.

